

Connections

A Publication for Employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation

May 21, 2015

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Team Talk - Stand Up and Be Counted

by Roberta Broeker

Hello Team MoDOT! In the last Team Talk I spoke about the values that keep me focused in my career and in my life. Today I want to spotlight the value of standing up and being counted, even when what you believe is unpopular.

Thomas J. Watson, former chief financial officer of IBM, said, "If you stand up and be counted, from time to time you may get yourself knocked down. But remember this: A man flattened by an opponent can get up again. A man flattened by conformity stays down for good."

It is part of our job to help people in Missouri understand how important transportation is. The legislative session ended last week and the fuel tax didn't pass, but that doesn't mean we are finished talking about the urgent need for transportation funding. Those of you who talked to our partners, or your legislators or even your family and friends know all too well this can be an unpopular topic. But still, we are not finished talking about it.

Missourians have a wide range of opinions on transportation funding. Some agree additional funding is needed but believe they already pay taxes and we need to work with what we have. Some, sadly, don't support an increase in transportation funding because they don't view us as good stewards of tax dollars, or they believe we should fund one form of transportation but completely ignore others.

It is the right of all Missourians to have their own opinions, but it remains our job as transportation experts to stand up for what we know is important and educate them on the necessity of funding for all forms of transportation. It is our job to show them we are good stewards of their dollars, and we have made smart decisions that serve them well. This is an area where we need to stand up and be counted.

I don't kid myself that I have 5,106 MoDOT employees who believe what I believe. I know there are employees who think we just need to better manage the resources we have. If you are one of those employees, this is also a "stand up and be counted" moment. There are things we can get better at, but we cannot solve Missouri's insufficient transportation funding problem, even if we can find and fix every single thing we can do better. The gap is simply too large. But I still want the opportunity to fix that thing that has you convinced it is only a matter of doing our work more efficiently. And I can't do that unless you tell someone. Problems don't get fixed when you keep them to yourself. Problems get fixed when YOU identify them and talk to someone who can help you change what needs to be changed, or explain the thing you never knew that actually makes the way we do that thing the right decision. And you have to be persistent. Change is sometimes hard and accomplished over the long haul. I became CFO in 2005 and there has never been a time that it hasn't been part of my job to talk about the transportation funding challenge we face in Missouri. And it still isn't fixed. So I'll keep talking about it.

Every conversation counts and every conversation can make a difference. We all need to be advocates for Missouri's future; not rely on others to do the heavy lifting or to be the one who initiates change.

If you need information or tools to help speak with others about transportation funding, reach out to your supervisor or Communication staff. Then stand up and be counted.

If you stand up and be counted, from time to time you may get yourself knocked down. But remember this: A man flattened by an opponent can get up again. A man flattened by conformity stays down for good.

(Thomas J. Watson)

Digital Highway Boards Used to Share Safety Messages - Vote Online for Your Favorite

by Linda Wilson-Horn

"Unbuckled? Seriously." "Put Down Your Phone and Drive." "Changing Lanes? Show Me Your Blinker." These messages are just some of the new safety messages the Missouri Department of Transportation has been displaying on its dynamic message signs for the past year. Drivers on Missouri's interstates and major highways pass by one of these 250 digital signs each day. Now, MoDOT has compiled its top 16 messages and is asking Missourians to vote for their favorite in an online survey at <http://modot.org/safety/DynamicMessageSigns.htm>.



"The primary purpose of the dynamic message signs is to convey critical information to motorists about lane closures or complete road closures," said MoDOT Traffic Management and Operations Engineer Jon Nelson. "However, when the roads are clear of incidents, we use the signs to convey safety messages with a catchy twist to get motorists' attention."

In Spring 2014, the messaging was overhauled to strategically display messages related to a certain theme suited for a particular month or time of year. For example, May is motorcycle awareness month and youth alcohol enforcement month. Safety messages are focused on these topics. As motorists drive a stretch of interstate, they will see messages related to one of these themes. The message themes change each month.

"MoDOT also posts the messages on its Facebook page on Mondays, and the response has been tremendously positive," said Nelson. "Our goal is to find ways to get the safety message to drivers so people will stop, think and make the right safety choice before they drive without a seatbelt or pick up their phone and text while they drive."

Missourians are also invited to submit their ideas for new messages. The space on the sign is limited to three lines with 16 spaces on each line. Message topics and ideas can be emailed to MoDOT at MoMessageBoards@modot.mo.gov.

Voting will be available online until June 20. The winner and top two runner-up messages will be announced in early July. Online voting can be found at <http://modot.org/safety/DynamicMessageSigns.htm>.

Move Over and Slow Down Awareness Month



May is Move Over and Slow Down Awareness Month. In 2012, Governor Jay Nixon and the Missouri General Assembly added MoDOT vehicles to the "Move Over" law, which protects law enforcement and emergency response vehicles parked on the side of the road. This law requires motorists to slow down or change lanes when approaching these vehicles. Since 2012, the law includes MoDOT vehicles parked with amber and white lights flashing.

"The law is simple: If you see flashing lights on the side of the road, move over to give workers and emergency personnel plenty of room to stay safe," said MoDOT Chief Engineer Ed Hassinger. "If you can't move over on a crowded highway, you should slow down as you pass them. We want motorists and our workers to make it home safe every day."

For MoDOT employees who spend their days on state highways, including MoDOT vehicles in the Move Over law helps them work more safely.

TRIP Report on Rural Road Conditions

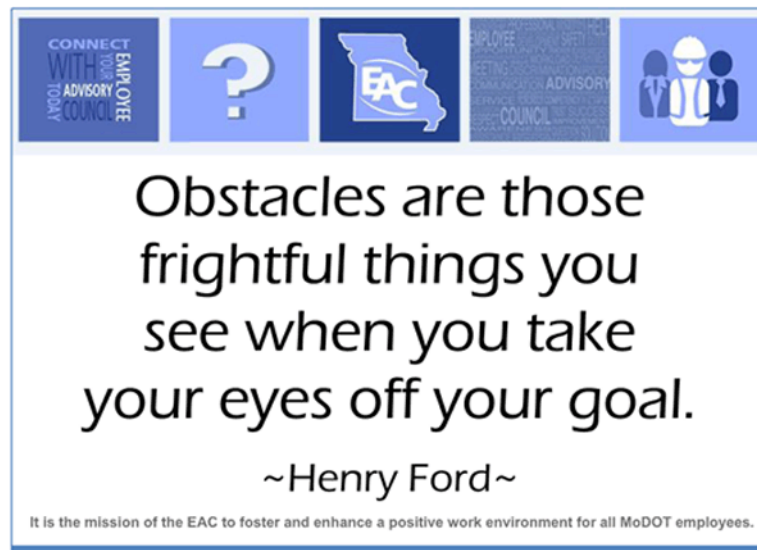
According to a new report issued on Tuesday by TRIP, America's rural roads and bridges have significant deficiencies. The report evaluates the safety and condition of the nation's rural roads and bridges and ranks states on a variety of factors such as bridge deficiency, pavement conditions and fatalities.



A news release issued by TRIP stated, "America's rural transportation system is in need of repairs and modernization to support economic growth in the nation's Heartland, which is a critical source of energy, food and fiber and home to an aging and increasingly diverse population that is heavily reliant on the quality of its transportation system."

TRIP is a national non-profit transportation research group based in Washington, DC.

The full release and report can be found on TRIP's website – [TRIP Rural Road Report](#).



What's Your Retirement IQ? Play the Scavenger Hunt and Find Out

by Linda Wilson-Horn

In celebration of State Employee Recognition Week, MOSERS and the State of Missouri Deferred Compensation Plan are teaming up to host the Retirement IQ Scavenger Hunt.

Beginning May 20, this three-week-long, online scavenger hunt will test your knowledge of important retirement benefits. Employees who complete the scavenger hunt will win an insulated cooler and be entered in the deferred compensation plan's State Employee Recognition Day prize drawing on June 11.



For more information on how to play and to watch for daily clues, visit the Missouri Deferred Compensation Plan website – Deferred Comp Scavenger Hunt.

MoDOT Youth Transportation Conference

Students interested in engineering or other transportation-related careers now have the opportunity to join MODOT for six days of exciting transportation activities, including competitions and college campus visits.



Students are selected from across the state to experience transportation careers first hand. Students entering the 9th through 12th grade for the 2015-2016 school year are eligible.

The event is July 19 - 24 in Jefferson City. Students stay overnight at Lincoln University.

Applications are due by June 30, 2015. Visit the conference website for program details and applications - Youth Camp.

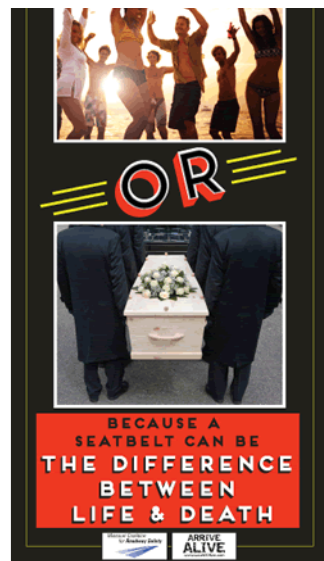
Please submit application, essay and letters by mail or fax to:
MoDOT Youth Transportation Conference
Attn: Elizabeth Reed, Equal Opportunity and Diversity Division
P.O. Box 270, Jefferson City, MO 65102
Email: Elizabeth.Reed@modot.mo.gov
Phone: 1-573-522-5333
Fax: 1-573-526-5918
Facebook: facebook.com/youthtransportationconference

Law Enforcement Buckling Down on Those Not Buckling Up - Click it or Ticket

by Kelly Jackson



As summer heats up, so does safety belt enforcement. Law enforcement officers are cracking down on unbelted drivers May 18-31 for an aggressive national "Click It or Ticket" campaign.



Even with all the advancements in automobile safety and education on the importance of seat belt use, Missouri's seat belt use remains relatively unchanged at 79 percent, and consistently below the national average of 87 percent.

Through this campaign the Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety will remind Missourians to buckle up, day and night, through state and national advertisements.

"Sixty-three percent of Missouri vehicle occupant fatalities (drivers and passenger) since the first of the year were unbuckled," said Bill Whitfield, chair of the executive committee of the Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety. "Seat belts clearly save lives, but unfortunately, too many folks still need a tough reminder, so law enforcement will be buckling down on those not buckling up."

Six out of 10 vehicle occupants killed in 2014 Missouri traffic crashes were unrestrained. Wearing a seat belt is the most effective way to reduce injuries and fatalities in a crash because it provides protection from being ejected and keeps motorists from smashing into windshields, dashboards and other passengers. When worn correctly, seat belts can reduce the risk of death for front seat occupants of passenger cars by 45 percent.

"You are gambling with your life each time you drive without a safety belt," said Whitfield. "Wearing a safety belt can save your life."

Click here to watch a short video - Click it or Ticket.



What's Happening



Employee Advisory Council Minutes

Minutes from the Employee Advisory Council's April meeting have been posted on the EAC SharePoint site. You can access them by using this link [April 2015 EAC minutes.pdf](#). If you have any questions or comments, please contact the EAC at eac@modot.mo.gov.

GOVERNOR'S AWARD FOR QUALITY AND PRODUCTIVITY "National Anthem" Acapella Singing Challenge

Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity "National Anthem" Acapella Singing Challenge

The 2015 Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity is scheduled for Oct. 29 in the Capitol Rotunda. This prestigious program will begin at 1:30 p.m. with the Presentation of Colors and singing of the National Anthem by one lucky and talented individual, or group of no more than three individuals (two to three-part harmony).

Interested? Click here for all the details – Singing Challenge.



Amtrak Offers Advanced Travel Discounts

On May 9 Amtrak announced a 20 percent discount for advance ticket purchases for travel beginning on Aug. 1, 2015.

The offer is exclusively available online at amtrak.com, using discount code



H253. The discount applies to travel on Missouri's service, the Missouri River Runner, which offers twice daily service between Kansas City and St. Louis.

A seven-day advance purchase is required. Some blackout dates and other restrictions apply. Terms and conditions and more information on ticketing

are available at amtrak.com.



Memorial Day Holiday

MoDOT offices will be closed on Monday, May 25 in observance of Memorial Day. We know that not all staff will be off this day, as our traffic management centers, motorists assist crews, customer service centers and other departments are running 24/7.

For those of us who will be off work for the holiday, let's remember our co-workers who will be on the job keeping MoDOT running and serving our customers.

For all of us, let's remember our men and women in uniform both past and present.

May Retirements

William E. Guinn – NW – 24
Edward W. Hess – NE – 29
Gene A. Young – NE – 25
Andrew S. Thompson – NE – 26
Mary K. Otting – CD – 28

Susan R. Koppelman – CD – 29
Kirk A. Kubicki – SW – 36
Dennis D. Blankenship – SW – 33
William L. Goodman – SE – 29
James D. Counts – SE – 27

Barbara E. Shelby – CO – 27
David B. Nichols – CO – 31
Shelley K. Claypool – CO – 27
Michael K. Curtit – CO – 29

In Memoriam

Ronald King
former D8 – April 24
Deane Sprout
CO – April 27
Jimmie Osgood
KC – April 28
Terry Porterfield
CO – April 28

Ray Kennedy
former D4 – April 28
Cletus Heidbreder
former D5 – May 1
David Willhoite
former D4 – May 6

Donald Webber
former D4 – May 6
August Harrington
former D7 – May 8
Charles Haulenbeek
CO – May 12

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Communications - MoDOT
P.O. Box 270, Jefferson City, MO 65102
573.751.2840 / www.modot.org

Editor: Tammy Wallace

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Be Prepared for Severe Weather

by Tim Taylor



In emergencies such as severe weather, early notification can be the difference between serious physical injury and staying safe. Technology now provides several means of early warning, one of which includes text alerts.

To help keep employees safe, MoDOT has added an emergency alert systems section on SharePoint. Whether you have a personal mobile phone or an assigned MoDOT mobile phone, taking the time to sign up for emergency text alerts could provide you the early warning you need to keep safe.

Visit the SharePoint site and get all the details and links for emergency text alerts - [Emergency Text Alerts](#).

Wellness Update How to Stay Active at Work

Did you know that Americans are sitting at work an average of five hours and 41 minutes each day? This prolonged sitting can increase your risk of many health problems, including diabetes. To combat this, the American Diabetes Association recently celebrated national "Get Fit, Don't Sit" day. Below are some tips to help us stay active at work:

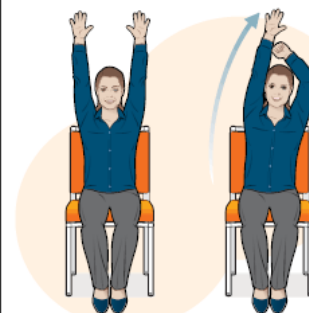
1. Walk to your coworker's desk instead of calling, emailing, or messaging them.
2. Set an alert on your computer for every 90 minutes to get up and move.
3. Try desk exercises - see Desk Moves flier.
4. Take the stairs.
5. Take a walk on your lunch break - "lunch-er-cise."
6. Take the furthest parking space.
7. Bike or walk to work.

It's not too late to sign up for the American Heart Association walking program. For for information:
The American Heart Association walking program
Walking for Wellness flier

To include your miles in the team competition, make sure to type your district in the department/team box and log your physical activity. The walking program ends June 29.

Desk Moves

Got 10 minutes? Try these seated moves to improve your fitness.



Central Office Happenings

State Employee Recognition Week

Missouri's annual State Employee Recognition Week, June 8-12, 2015, will honor the dedication and commitment of state employees. The State Employee Appreciation Day, held on the Capitol south lawn from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Thursday, June 11, will feature numerous state offices and local businesses with displays and information available to the public highlighting their accomplishments and services. Also, please check out the special offers available for state employees at this link: <http://serd.mo.gov/index.htm>.

STATE EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION WEEK

June 8-12, 2015, will honor the dedication and commitment of state employees.



Monday
MEE Zone Monday – Human Resources MEE Zone sponsored activity in Divisions/Districts.

Tuesday
Tempting Treats Day – Employees can bring in their favorite treats to share with coworkers.

Wednesday
Wellness Wednesday – Get out and get moving during at least one break today with a quick walk outside. Bring in a healthy snack to share with coworkers!

Thursday Missouri State Employee Appreciation Day at the Capitol
Throwback Thursday (#TBT)– Replicate “Throwback Thursday” Facebook posts by sporting fashions from the 1980s. Work groups can start the day with a quick “best dressed” contest with photos of the winners featured in Connections.

Friday
Who Are You Rootin’ For? – In honor of the 30th anniversary of the 1985 I-70 World Series between the KC Royals and STL Cardinals, show your support for your favorite team. Are you RED or BLUE? With supervisor permission and if employees have no meetings with outside partners, jeans may be worn.



Take Your Child to Work Day

for Central Office and Central District Employees
June 4 - beginning at 7:30 a.m.
Central District and Material Lab buildings

There is a change to registration this year. Check the activities you would like to participate in on the registration survey. This allows groups to be evenly distributed for each activity. Those registering will receive an email the week of the event with activity times. Groups and times will also be displayed at the registration table the morning of the event.

Ways to register:

1) Click [here](#) and fill out the survey online - Online Registration Survey.

2) Open open the Form Registration Survey, complete and click the submit form button or print the document and mail to: MoDOT, 830 MoDOT Drive, Jefferson City, MO 65109, Attn: Adam Hoffman, EODD.

Registration must be completed by the end of the day Friday, May 29.

Read more details here - [Children to Work Day Memo](#). Questions? Contact Adam Hoffman - 573-526-5611.

Take a Child to Work Day Schedule

7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.	Registration (Central District Parrish Room)
7:30 a.m. - 9 a.m.	Equipment Tour, Archeological Dig (parking lot behind Central District)
9 a.m. - 10 a.m.	Activities Operation Egg Drop (Central District Muri Room) Tower Building (Central District East/West Room) Materials Lab (Materials Lab Building)
10 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.	Break and move to next activity location
10:15 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.	Activities

	Operation Egg Drop (Central District Muri Room) Tower Building (Central District East/West Room) Materials Lab (Materials Lab Building)
11:15 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	Lunch
12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.	Activities Operation Egg Drop (Central District Muri Room) Tower Building (Central District East/West Room) Materials Lab (Materials Lab Building)
1:30 p.m. - End	Take children to your work place



MEE Zone Events

Social Security Seminar

Each seminar will take place from 2 to 3 p.m.

May 28 - Gold Room, 830 MoDOT Drive

June 4 - Blue Room, 830 MoDOT Drive

June 16 - CO Training Room B, 601 W. Main St (HR Annex)

June 18 - CO Training Room B, 601 W Main St (HR Annex)

The Love Chromosome

June 8 - 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Central Office Conference Room 100, 105 W Capitol

Derrick and Julie are a brother and sister duo who travel the world doing motivational speaking. Their story is phenomenal. Julie and Derrick have both learned to make obstacles opportunities. They both love their life, and their message is one of hope, joy, inspiration and laughter.

Sign up for these Mee Zone events through the [LMS Student Center](#) or contact Amanda Woody (573) 526-5617.

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Clean Community Team



From county roads like Finch Road (pictured at left) to state highways, lakes and streams, volunteers armed with trash bags and a desire to clean up their rural communities set out in April in Linn and Sullivan counties. The community-wide clean up spanned two counties and was a joint effort between the departments of Transportation, Conservation and Natural Resources.

Northwest District Area Engineer Tonya Lohman helped coordinate the clean up from the MoDOT side of things, arranging to have vests, bags and signs for the volunteers. More than 70 volunteers participated from Linneus in Linn County to Boynton in Sullivan County.



The Smithfield Adopt-A-Highway group teamed up to tackle portions of Route 5. Message boards were set up to alert motorists that they might encounter several different groups cleaning up the right of way in Linn and Sullivan counties.



After the community clean up, many of the volunteers gathered to enjoy a picnic meal together.



On display at the picnic were what the group called "special treasures" that they found along the roadside during their clean up efforts.

Armed Forces Day Event in St. Joseph

The local Salvation Army was the site of an event for veterans and their families May 16 in St. Joseph. The one-day event, called Vet2Vet, was a chance for vets to learn about local resources available to them in the St. Joseph and Northwest Missouri area. Representatives from educational institutions, social services and local businesses filled the gymnasium. Human Resources Manager Kendra Ezzell staffed a table and represented the Northwest District at the event, which is now in its fifth year.



Veterans from around the St. Joseph area gathered at the Salvation Army for a service honoring them on Armed Forces Day.



After the Armed Forces Day ceremony, vendors from the community, including MoDOT and other potential employers, filled the gymnasium at the Salvation Army.

Teen Safe Driving Assembly in Maryville

Four high schools participated in the Teen Safe Driving Assembly in Maryville on April 29. This informative program was funded through a Northwest Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety grant that was awarded to the Northwest Missouri Regional Council of Governments. The event was planned and organized by the Northwest Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety's Education Co-chair Linda Laderoute.

Northeast Senior Highway Designer Shannon Skoglund was able to attend the event and, as an added bonus, her daughter was participating in the event as a student from South Nodaway High School. Shannon proudly displayed the picture below on her personal Facebook page along with an overview of what the students heard at the event.



Students in grades 9-12 from South Nodaway High School take a break from their activities at the Teen Safe Driving Assembly to pose for a picture.

For more info

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Communications Specialist
Northwest District
816.387.2495
Marcia.Johnson@modot.mo.gov

3602 N. Belt Highway
St. Joseph, MO 64506-1399

Comments & Suggestions

We would like to hear from you. Send comments and suggestions to Tammy Wallace at Tammy.Wallace@modot.mo.gov.

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Let's Get Ready to Rumble....Some More!

To increase safety, the Northeast District recently tried something new in one of their work zones. They used short-term temporary rumble strips. The strips were placed at a maintenance work zone on U.S. Route 36 where traffic was reduced by one lane while the crew completed concrete repairs.

"This is the only maintenance job we have used them on so far," said Brian Untiedt, traffic operations engineer for the Northeast District. "They worked very well at getting the motorists' attention and slowing the drivers down," he said.

Short term rumble strips are made to be portable and stable. The noise and vibration are to draw the driver's attention to unexpected changes in traffic conditions.

"When we used them on the U.S. 36 job, most drivers would reduce their speed as soon as they ran over the strips," said Becky Novinger, maintenance supervisor at the Shelbina maintenance facility.

There are also long-term temporary rumble strips that are made with an adhesive backing and are intended to stay in place longer than the short-term ones. The district is planning to try these in the future on a bridge project.



Temporary rumble strips were used during a maintenance project on U.S. 36. They were used as a means to get traffic to slow down when traveling through the work zone.

Around the District...



Linda Wilson-Horn from Central Office conducted Public Involvement and NEPA Training last week in Hannibal. She spoke with Northeast employees on how you can communicate with the public to get their acceptance of your work, provide input on projects, provide detours for work zones and overall support MoDOT's work.



Retirement seminars were held last week in Macon and Hannibal. Several employees participated. Pictured above is one of the seminars that was held at the Hannibal district office.



The Northeast Coalition for Roadway Safety participated in Lewis County Safety Day held each year for the 5th grade students at area schools. Cyndy Bliem-Sharp had a station at the event where she played a safety quiz game with the kids.

The NE Coalition teams up with KTVO in Kirksville for the Just Drive campaign. An assembly was held at Brashear High School last week where Kayle Denny, from ThinkFirst Missouri, spoke to the group about how a decision changed her life forever. An I-pad mini was given away to one lucky student. Pictured above is Ela Soroka and Fred Beck, from KTVO, with the winner!

For more info

Marisa Brown-Ellison
Communications Manager
Northeast District
573.248.2502
Marisa.Ellison@modot.mo.gov

1711 S. Highway 61
Hannibal, MO 63401

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Missouri Governor Highlights Plight of Funding on Closed KC Bridge

Standing below the recently closed Route 291 bridge, Governor Jay Nixon called upon elected officials to solve the transportation funding crisis this month.

Crews had closed the northbound Route 291 bridge over the Missouri River at Sugar Creek today for emergency repairs. Inspectors found significant deterioration during a routine inspection. The timeline for repairs is unknown. Motorists traveling northbound were quickly moved onto the southbound Route 291 bridge making traffic run head-to-head. The 66-year old northbound bridge carries almost 11,000 vehicles a day, but the closure will impact more than 22,000 motorists who travel both bridges daily.

[Click here for more information on the Governor's visit.](#)



MoDOT helps Delaware DOT Learn the Ropes About Diverging Diamonds

MoDOT's Kansas City District Office continues to lead the way when it comes to innovation in transportation. That's was evident after a group of engineers from the Delaware DOT asked MoDOT if they could visit and get their insight on diverging diamond interchanges.

The Delaware DOT is looking to build its first DDI and turned to MoDOT primarily because the Missouri agency leads the nation with the most DDIs built.

Three members of the Delaware DOT and a representative from the Federal Highway Department visited the District Office on May 18.

During the morning and midday hours, the group toured the I-435 and Front St. DDI, the 210 Highway DDI, which is currently under construction and the DDI on I-435 and Roe in Overland Park. Designers from MoDOT as well as HNTB were on hand which gave the Delaware group an opportunity to ask questions regarding construction, pavement markings, traffic signals and other best practices.

The Delaware group also took part in a question and answer session that focused on setting up public meetings and how MoDOT unveiled its plans to build one of the many DDIs.

MoDOT Senior Highway Designer, Joshua Scott encouraged the group to provide video presentations that would offer an overhead view of a diverging diamond. Scott said the video would give the public a better idea of how the driving pattern worked and help ease any fears motorists might have.

Delaware P.E. Darren O'Neill said that it was important that his group visit the Kansas City District office because of the success MoDOT has with designing and building DDIs. "The visit with MoDOT has been good, we're getting a good feel of the projects thanks to the team", O'Neil said.



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Central District Employees Selected for APEX Program

Two Central District employees were selected to participate in the APEX Accelerated PE Cross Training program this year: Senior Traffic Studies Specialist Garrett Depue and Intermediate Construction Inspector Daniel Roeger.

The program is designed to help accelerate and maximize the potential of professional engineering employees through rotational cross-training development.

Over the course of a year, each employee in the program is assigned to a MoDOT department which will focus the employee's experience in one specialty area. It also expands their knowledge at MoDOT through rotational assignments in four areas selected by the employee, their leadership advisor and the program delivery leadership group.

Roeger welcomes the chance to learn new things and to be removed from his comfort zone.

"I'm honored, excited, and anxious," said Roeger. "It's a great feeling knowing my bosses trust that I'll succeed in other divisions, but I'm also a little nervous. In construction, structure and repetition is comfortable – surprises are usually problems. I've been taken out of my routine and been placed in a new environment, and I can only grow from it."

Depue also sees the program as an opportunity to build relationships within MoDOT.

"I see being a part of the program as a privilege," said Depue. "I'm excited to get out of the environment I know and explore new frontiers. I hope to become a well-rounded MoDOT engineer by learning some new skills and by getting exposed to different division operations. The best part of this program I think will be to meet new co-workers and build and use those relationships to do my job and serve the public better."

This year, Roeger will cross train in each of the following departments or projects: Local Programs and Planning; Project Management and Administration; Highway Design and the Columbia I-70 Design/Build project. Depue will rotate through the Construction; Central Office Highway Safety and Traffic; Local Programs and Planning; and Highway Design divisions.



Intermediate Construction Inspector Danny Roeger (left) and Senior Traffic Studies Specialist Garrett Depue have recently been selected for the APEX cross training program.

Submit Employee Concerns to CDEAEC

It's the mission of the Central District Employee Advisory Extension Council (CDEAEC) to help foster and enhance a positive work environment for all district employees. The CDEAEC exists to assist management and employees with communication issues, policy understanding, general concerns and improvement of district operations.

If you would like to submit a concern to the CDEAEC, you can submit an online EAC form or print out a written form, located at this address:

<http://sharepoint/facilitation/EOD/eac/SitePages/Home.aspx>

You can also contact a district representative near you.

Central District representatives and their contact information can be found at this address:

<http://sharepoint/districts/cd/EAEC/default.aspx>



District EAEC/EAC representatives meet to discuss employee policies and concerns at a recent meeting in May.

Around the District



Area Engineer Preston Kramer introduces Cyndra Lorey, Executive Director of the Rolla Regional Economic Commission, during a Highways and Transportation Commission meeting on May 6 in Jefferson City. Lorey spoke about partnering with MoDOT to bring economic prosperity to the city of Rolla.



Transportation Project Manager Bruce Green (left) and District Design Manager Natalie Roark (right) discuss ADA sidewalk improvements along Missouri Boulevard in Jefferson City with a citizen during a public meeting at the Central District Office.

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Comments & Suggestions

We would like to hear from you. Send comments and suggestions to Tammy Wallace at Tammy.Wallace@modot.mo.gov.

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St. Louis
District

Maintenance Building Recognition Promotes Stronger Team Practices

by Shaunda White



Brad Kelley (left) and Mike Belding (right) stand beside the Team Player billboard inside of the Ballas maintenance break room. The two were nominated for the recognition for May.

"I think this is a great way to show that my team appreciates my efforts," said Belding.

Kelley shared, "It shows that what I'm doing as part of the team does not go unnoticed and I appreciate that."

Great team player work ethics lead to stronger teams. In the Ballas maintenance building, their mantra is the military phrase "I've got your six" which means "I've got your back." All of the employees have the phrase on their hard hats.

"'I've got your six' is not something we take lightly. With that phrase posted on our hard hats, it constantly reminds us that we always look out for each other's safety as a team while working on the highways. Making it home safely every day proves that we all are team players," said Fogg.

The Ballas maintenance building has found a unique way to make a big deal out of employees who earn the "Team Player of the Month" title in their building. Through recognition and acknowledgement, they make sure the team players understand that their work ethics are appreciated.

"The Ballas maintenance building is full of employees who truly go above and beyond the call of duty on a regular basis. As a group, we came up with a way to highlight great team efforts," said Mike Fogg, Ballas maintenance supervisor.

Every month the Ballas maintenance staff vote for the employee from their building they believe represents a team player. Previous winners were recognized for their willingness to take initiative, demonstrate leadership, watch out for their teammates and go the extra mile.

Once an employee is selected, their name is displayed on the Team Player billboard in the building and they receive a designated parking spot for the month. The parking spot includes a Team Player of the Month sign displaying their name.

Recently, the building had a tie that led to two employees sharing the recognition and parking spot. Mike Belding and Brad Kelley, both maintenance workers, were nominated for May.



Mike Belding (left) and Brad Kelley (right) stand next to the Team Player designated parking sign displaying their names in the Ballas maintenance parking lot. The two are rotating parking in the spot for the month.

Around the District.....



District Engineer Greg Horn speaks about the importance of safety at the Share the Road press conference on May 15 at the Missouri History Museum. The conference was held in collaboration with Trailnet and Metro Transit on National Bike to Work Day.



On May 19 Keith Mueller, education specialist from Central Electric Power, gives a demonstration at the SL Safety Rep monthly meeting on how to prevent electricity injuries on.

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Comments & Suggestions

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Southwest District at Work



WANT TO HONK THE HORN? – Springfield Intermediate Maintenance Worker Ryan Flanigan shows a third grader how to honk the horn in the Emergency Response Vehicle during a Careers on Wheels event at McCulloch Elementary School in Republic May 15. (Photo/David Mitchell)



I LIVE RIGHT THERE – Transportation Project Manager Kristi Bachman (center) talks to a person attending a recent open house meeting in Republic to answer questions about a project to build a new bridge over I-44 at Route N/T in Greene County. (Photo/David Mitchell)



MAKING A POINT – Intermediate Construction Inspector Aaron Rieder discusses progress on the new Crossroads Interchange project on I-44/I-49 at mile marker 12 east of Joplin with the contractor. The project features a new bridge over the interstate at Jasper County Road 190 with roundabouts at either end of the bridge. (Photo/David Mitchell)



FIRST AID – Republic Maintenance Crew Leaders Keith Chandler (left) and Ron Plaster get hands-on CPR training during a First Aid/CPR/AED class at the District Office in Springfield on May 14. (Photo/David Mitchell)

Spring Mowing Underway

by David Mitchell

Drivers in the Southwest District should be on the lookout for MoDOT crews mowing along the shoulders of area highways. The crews have been out since May 11 for the first of three mowing seasons (spring, summer, fall).

The purpose of the mowing is to improve safety for drivers, rather than the visual appeal of the road.

“Currently, the focus is on routes with the most significant sight distance issues,” said District Maintenance Engineer Michael Middleton.

Middleton said those tend to be the district’s minor routes with curves and hills that sometimes restrict how far a driver can see.



“We’ve got 88 tractors covering 14,700 shoulder miles,” he said. “We can do that in about four weeks.”

Lamar Senior Maintenance Worker Marshall Miller uses a brush hog to mow along the MoDOT right of way on Barton County Route HH east of Lamar. (Photo/David Mitchell)

An additional goal, said Middleton, is to mow I-44 from the Oklahoma state line to mile marker 113 and Route 65 from Springfield to the Arkansas state line before Memorial Day and the increased holiday traffic.

Crews are making a single pass, cutting a path between six and 15 feet wide. That’s been the policy for several years. Every other year during the fall, mowers will make two passes.

“Each time we mow,” Middleton said, “you can just cut a check for \$750,000.”

That’s a little more than \$50 per mile.

Middleton urged drivers to be aware of slow-moving mowing crews along highways this time of year.

“At two-and-a-half- to three miles an hour, you will approach them pretty fast,” he said. “We’ve got flashing lights, signs and follow vehicles trying to let you know we’re out there. We just ask drivers to be careful.”

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Comments & Suggestions

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Southeast District's Shannon Inman Nominated for State Employee of the Month

Congratulations to Senior Materials Inspector Shannon Inman for his recent nomination for State Employee of the Month. The March 12 edition of Connections included a story about Inman's act of kindness during a winter weather event in early March. He described it as "just paying it forward," but to the gentleman who lost control of his vehicle, the act was greatly appreciated.

Please see an excerpt from the letter Inman received from Interim Director Roberta Broeker below. For more about Inman's actions, please visit the March 12 edition of Connections at: <http://modot.org/newsandinfo/Connections/documents/March12.pdf>.

Dear Shannon:

I am pleased to inform you that due to your quick thinking and personal sacrifice to protect the safety of a motorist in need, you have been chosen as MoDOT's nominee for State Employee of the Month. Because of your dedication and selfless actions, we're proud to have you on the MoDOT team.



**Senior Materials Inspector
Shannon Inman**

Each month, the State of Missouri and the Office of Administration recognize the individual contribution of a Missouri state employee who has provided outstanding service for the citizens of Missouri. The employee receiving the honor of State Employee of the Month is recognized for his or her own personal contribution to their worksite and the State of Missouri. If chosen for this award, you will be recognized at a ceremony to be held at the Governor's Office in Jefferson City.

On behalf of the department, thank you for making safety your number-one priority with Missourians and within MoDOT. Good luck in the statewide competition! We sincerely hope you are chosen for this well-deserved award.

*Best Wishes,
Roberta Broeker, CPA
Interim Director*

SE AE Shares Importance of Engineering with Students

Southeast Area Engineer David Wyman recently visited Clearwater Middle School to share his love of engineering with Ms. Silvey's eighth grade class. In addition to Dave's presentation, students also got to put their bridge building skills to the test by constructing models.



Progress on Route 19 in Shannon County



The temporary bridge on Route 19 over Sinking Creek in Shannon County is nearing completion. It will be ready for traffic by Memorial Day weekend!

Reminders...

- **May 27-** Blood Drive SE District Office 11 a.m.-3 p.m.
- **May 28-** Dewayne "Catfish" Ligon's retirement luncheon 11:30 a.m. Van Buren Maintenance Facility
- **June 8-12-** Employee Recognition Week-more details about SE District events coming soon!

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